THUNDERBOLTS® 5

CIVIL WAR™ II

MARVEL

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MALIN
YACKEY

JUSTICE, LIKE LIGHTNING...
THUNDERBOLTS
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COVERS
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JUSTICE, LIKE LIGHTNING...

THUNDERBOLTS

Bucky Barnes was Captain America's sidekick during World War II…until he got blown up, captured by the Soviets and turned into the deadly Winter Soldier. Now he has Nick Fury's old job as the Man on the Wall, protecting Earth from unseen threats.

The Thunderbolts were bad guys pretending to be good guys…until some of them realized they actually liked being good guys. But their checkered pasts landed them in Pleasant Hill, S.H.I.E.L.D.'s reality-bending super-prison. Bucky broke them out on the condition that they protect Kobik (the sentient Cosmic Cube that created Pleasant Hill) and help him with his mission.

But their first outings as a team made the Thunderbolts plenty of enemies, and Kobik was forced to move the base to the Arctic to save her friends from a vicious attack by the Squadron Supreme. Meanwhile, a new Inhuman who can predict the future has incited a second super hero civil war, but the effects haven't been felt by the isolated Thunderbolts…yet.

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THUNDERBOLTS

THERE IS NO HIGH ROAD: PART FIVE
"WHAT WE DO BEST"

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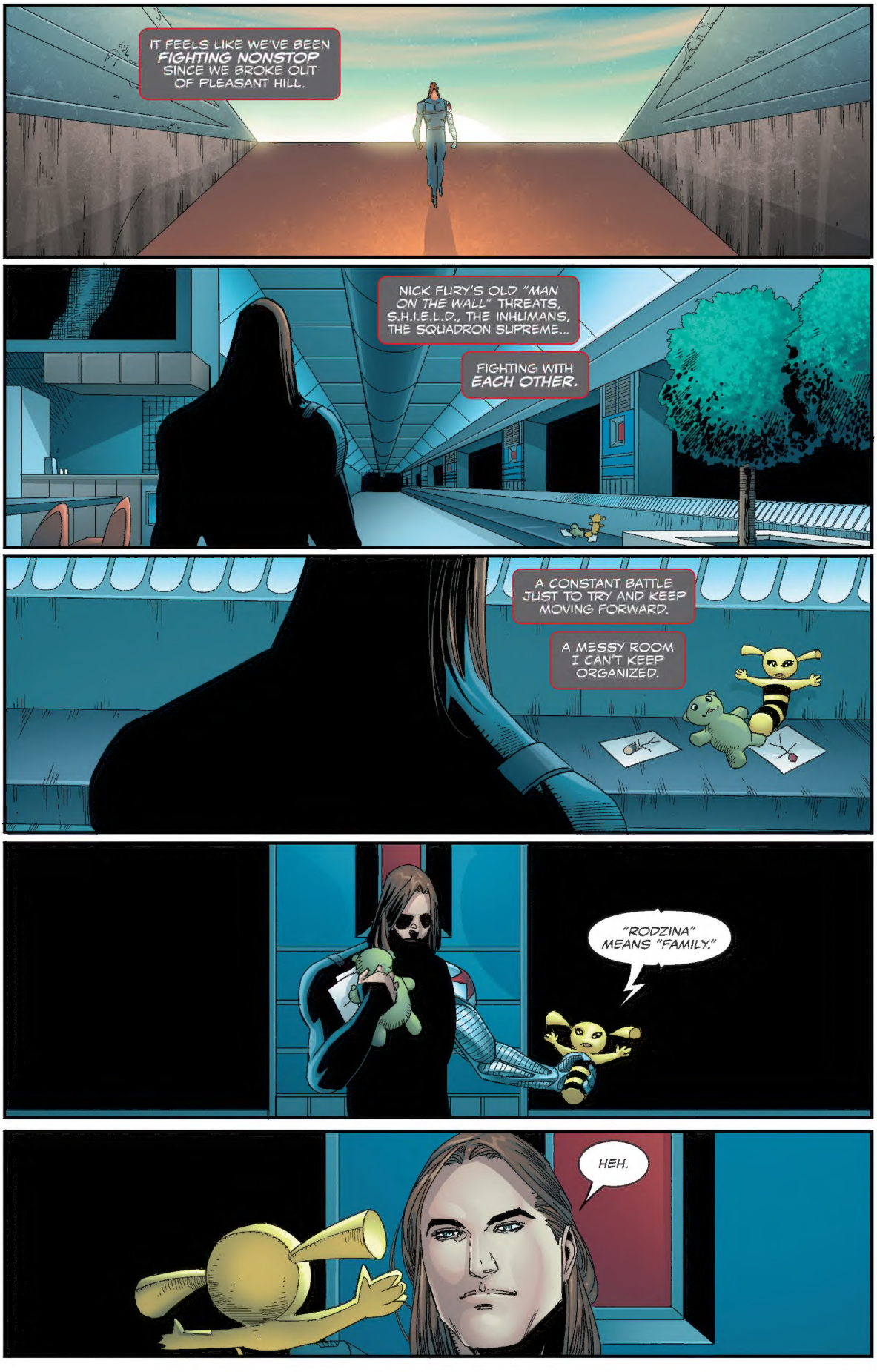
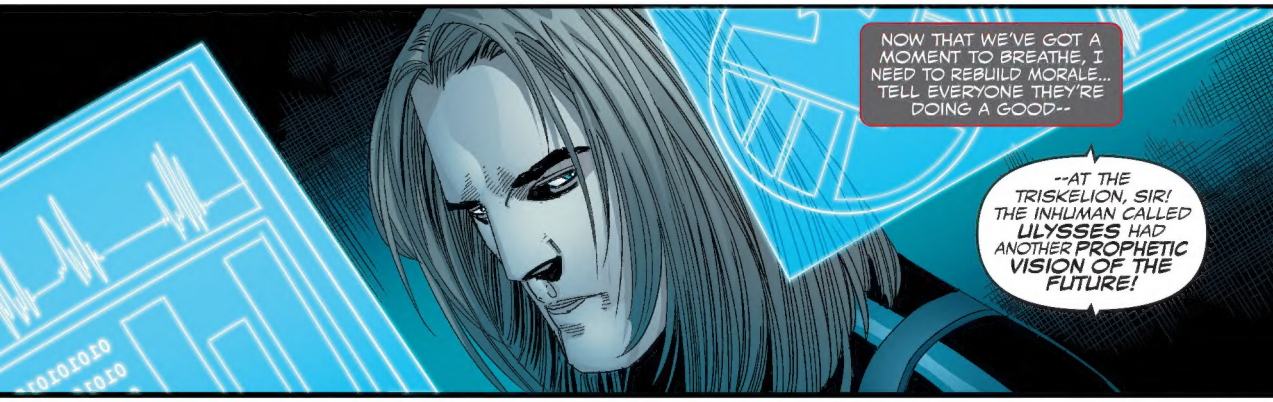
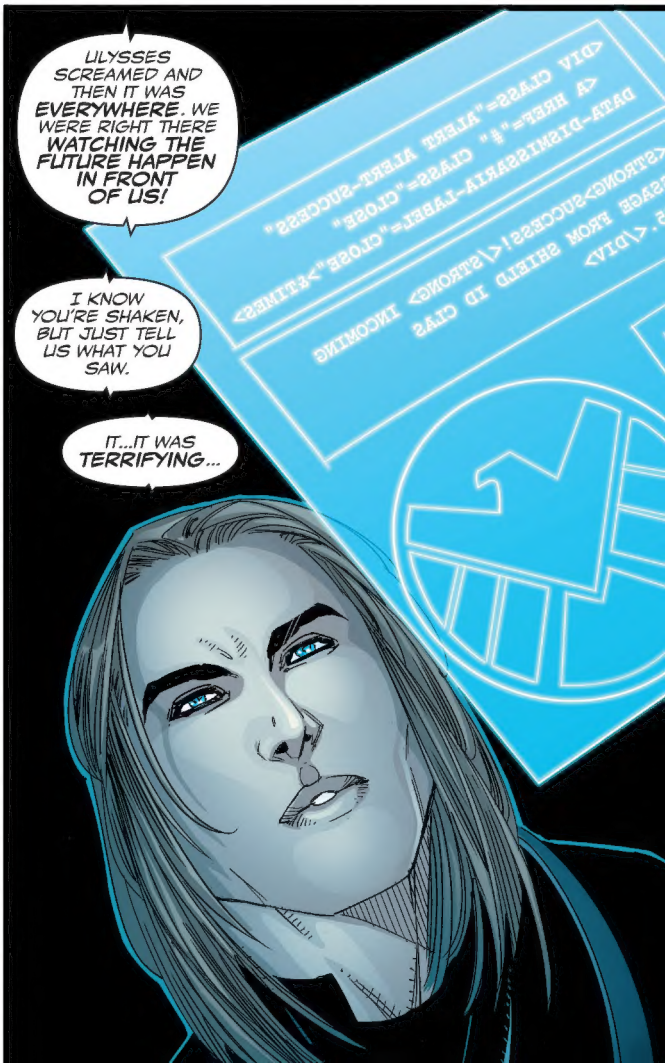
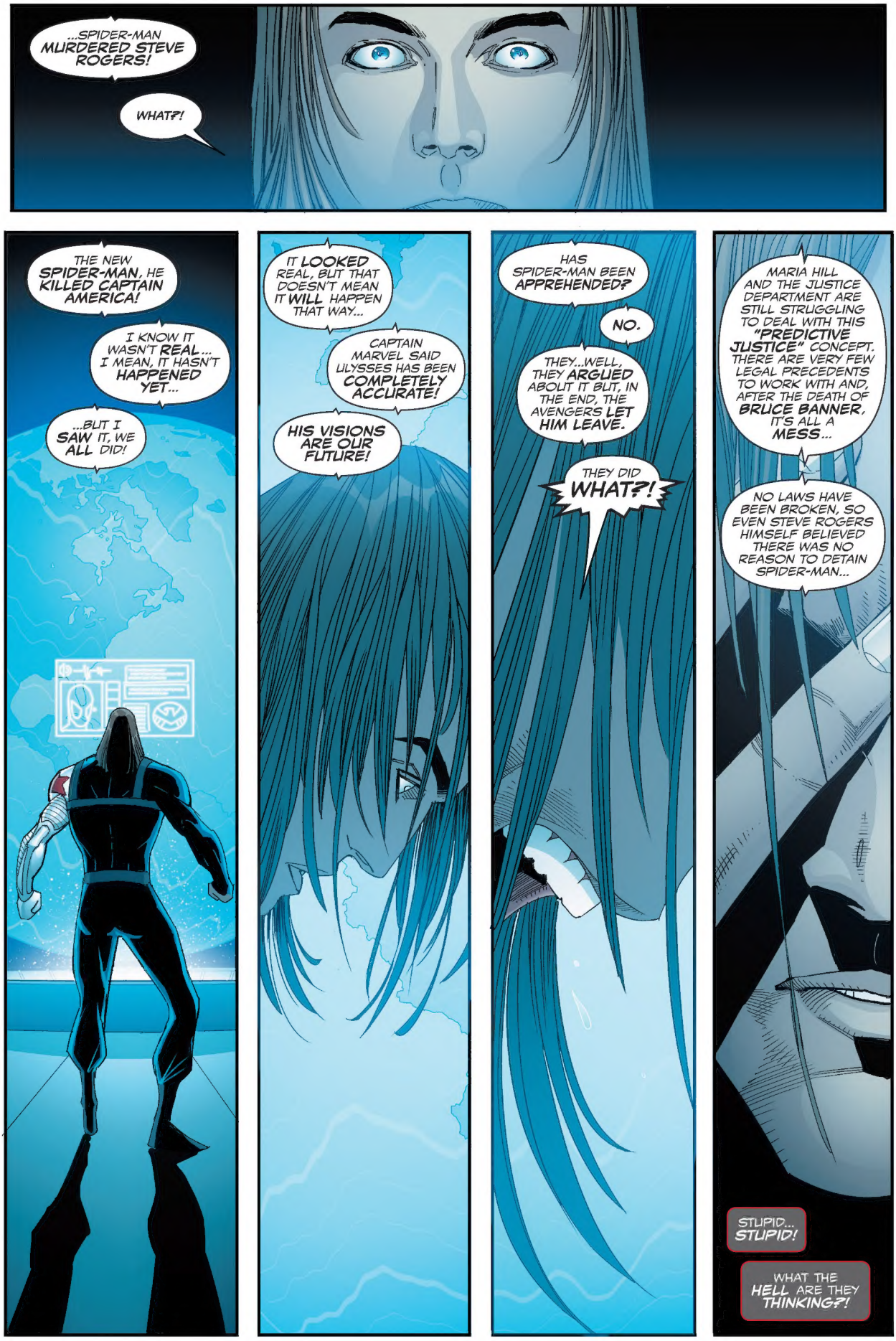

IT FEELS LIKE WE'VE BEEN FIGHTING NONSTOP SINCE WE BROKE OUT OF PLEASANT HILL.
NICK FURY'S OLD "MAN ON THE WALL" THREATS, S.H.I.E.L.D., THE INHUMANS, THE SQUADRON SUPREME...
FIGHTING WITH EACH OTHER.
A CONSTANT BATTLE JUST TO TRY AND KEEP MOVING FORWARD.
A MESSY ROOM I CAN'T KEEP ORGANIZED.
"RODZINA" MEANS "FAMILY."
HEH.

I DON'T KNOW IF THIS TEAM WORKS TOGETHER WELL, BUT THEY'RE CERTAINLY WORKING HARD.
I'VE GIVEN THEM AN IMPOSSIBLE, UNENDING TASK AND THEY'RE DOING THEIR BEST TO FOLLOW THROUGH ON IT.

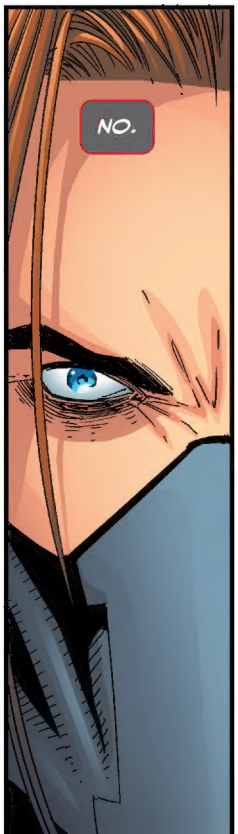

NOW THAT WE'VE GOT A MOMENT TO BREATHE, I NEED TO REBUILD MORALE... TELL EVERYONE THEY'RE DOING A GOOD--
--AT THE TRISKELION, SIR! THE INHUMAN CALLED ULYSSES HAD ANOTHER PROPHETIC VISION OF THE FUTURE!

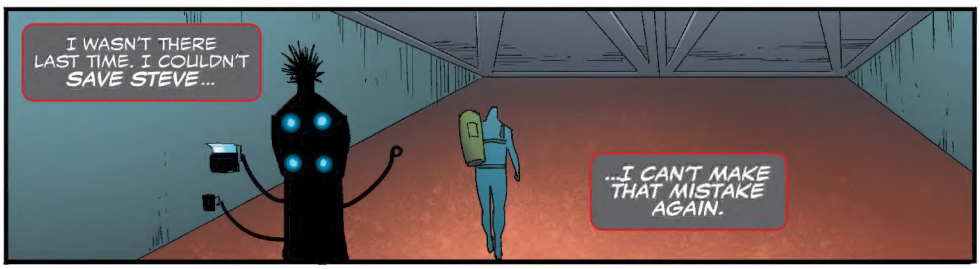
OH, MAN, ANOTHER INHUMAN PROBLEM...
THIS TIME WE ALL SAW IT! S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENTS AT THE SCENE, THE INHUMANS, THE AVENGERS... EVERYONE!

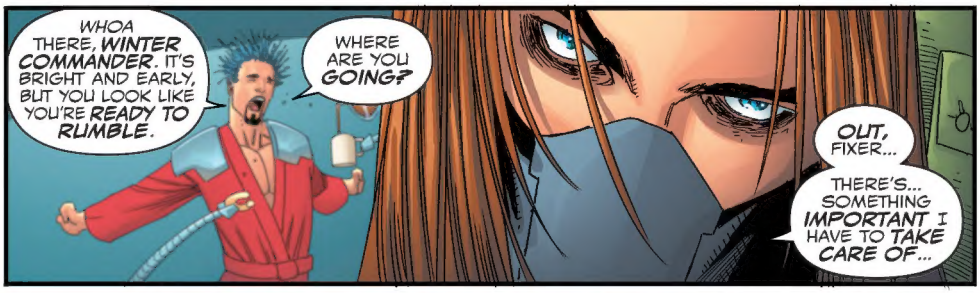

ULYSSES SCREAMED AND THEN IT WAS EVERYWHERE. WE WERE RIGHT THERE WATCHING THE FUTURE HAPPEN IN FRONT OF US!
I KNOW YOU'RE SHAKEN, BUT JUST TELL US WHAT YOU SAW.
IT...IT WAS TERRIFYING...


...SPIDER-MAN MURDERED STEVE ROGERS!
WHAT?!
THE NEW SPIDER-MAN, HE KILLED CAPTAIN AMERICA!
I KNOW IT WASN'T REAL... I MEAN, IT HASN'T HAPPENED YET...
...BUT I SAW IT, WE ALL DID!
IT LOOKED REAL, BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN IT WILL HAPPEN THAT WAY...
CAPTAIN MARVEL SAID ULYSSES HAS BEEN COMPLETELY ACCURATE!
HIS VISIONS ARE OUR FUTURE!
HAS SPIDER-MAN BEEN APPREHENDED?
NO.
THEY...WELL, THEY ARGUED ABOUT IT BUT, IN THE END, THE AVENGERS LET HIM LEAVE.
THEY DID WHAT?!
MARIA HILL AND THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT ARE STILL STRUGGLING TO DEAL WITH THIS "PREDICTIVE JUSTICE" CONCEPT. THERE ARE VERY FEW LEGAL PRECEDENTS TO WORK WITH AND, AFTER THE DEATH OF BRUCE BANNER, IT'S ALL A MESS...
NO LAWS HAVE BEEN BROKEN, SO EVEN STEVE ROGERS HIMSELF BELIEVED THERE WAS NO REASON TO DETAIN SPIDER-MAN...
STUPID... STUPID!
WHAT THE HELL ARE THEY THINKING?!

IDEALISTIC, LAW-ABIDING STEVE ROGERS...
...DOING THE "RIGHT" THING EVEN IF IT KILLS HIM...
...AGAIN.


NO.


I WASN'T THERE LAST TIME. I COULDN'T SAVE STEVE...
...I CAN'T MAKE THAT MISTAKE AGAIN.


WHOA THERE, WINTER COMMANDER. IT'S BRIGHT AND EARLY, BUT YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'RE READY TO RUMBLE.
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
OUT, FIXER...
THERE'S... SOMETHING IMPORTANT I HAVE TO TAKE CARE OF...

I'M TAKING THE JET.
OOOOO-KAY!

I SHOULDN'T DO THIS...
...BUT NO ONE ELSE WILL.
TIME TO DESTINATION: 4 HOURS, 16 MINUTES.
COMPUTER, MAINTAIN ALTITUDE AND AVOID DETECTION.
AFFIRMATIVE.
BACK IN THE SADDLE...
...BACK ON THE HUNT.
ZVEZDA MOYA...*
(I LOVE WATCHING YOU GET READY FOR WORK.)
*RUSSIAN FOR "MY STAR."
DON'T THINK ABOUT NAT.
JUST...
...DON'T.

DISTANCE TO PREVIOUS SIGHTING OF THE TARGET?
1.38 KILOMETERS NORTH-NORTH-EAST.
STAY OUT OF SIGHT.
IF COMMUNICATION IS LOST FOR MORE THAN TWO HOURS, RETURN TO HQ.
AFFIRMATIVE.
A SIMPLE MISSION.
A SINGLE TARGET.
I HATE TO ADMIT IT, BUT...
...IT JUST FEELS RIGHT.

I KEEP TRYING TO ESCAPE IT, BUT I CAN'T.
BUCKY THE LONE WOLF
BUCKY THE KILLER
THE WINTER SOLDIER.
NO.
STOP IT.
STOP FEELING SORRY FOR YOURSELF, YOU STUPID SELFISH FOOL...
THIS ISN'T ABOUT YOU.
YOU'RE DOING THIS FOR STEVE.

SPIDER-MAN. THE NEW MODEL.
SUPER-STRENGTH, AGILITY AND REFLEXES.
STICKS TO WALLS.
WEB-SHOOTERS.
AND A CELL PHONE.
HEH.
ALMOST TOO EASY.
I'LL TRANQ HIM...NAB HIM...
LOCK HIM AWAY SO HE DOESN'T DO SOMETHING STUPID
I WON'T KILL HIM...I'LL JUST STOP HIM.
STOP HIM FROM HURTING ANYONE.
STOP ANOTHER TRAGEDY
FORCE THE WORLD TO MAKE SENSE

KDX
WHA--
WHOA!!
HEY.
HEY.
HEY!
NOT COOL!
DAMN.

OOF!
DAMMIT!
NOW YOU SEE ME...
...NOW YOU DON'T, RIFLE-DUDE!
I...
...I DON'T WANT TO HURT YOU!

OH, SURE...
UNNH!
...THE GUY SHOOTING DOESN'T WANNA HURT ME!
I DIDN'T DO MY RESEARCH.
NEXT TIME, JUST TAG ME ON INSTAGRAM, 'KAY?
THIS SPIDER-MAN IS DIFFERENT
OKAY. SLOW DOWN.
DON'T LET HIM RILE YOU.
CONCENTRATE...
THERE!

GOTTA NEUTRALIZE HIM FAST
THE LONGER IT TAKES, THE LESS I CAN CONTROL THE OUTCOME
OH, CRAP!
UNNNH!
THAT'S THE TICKET
KNOCK HIM OUT
FINISH THIS

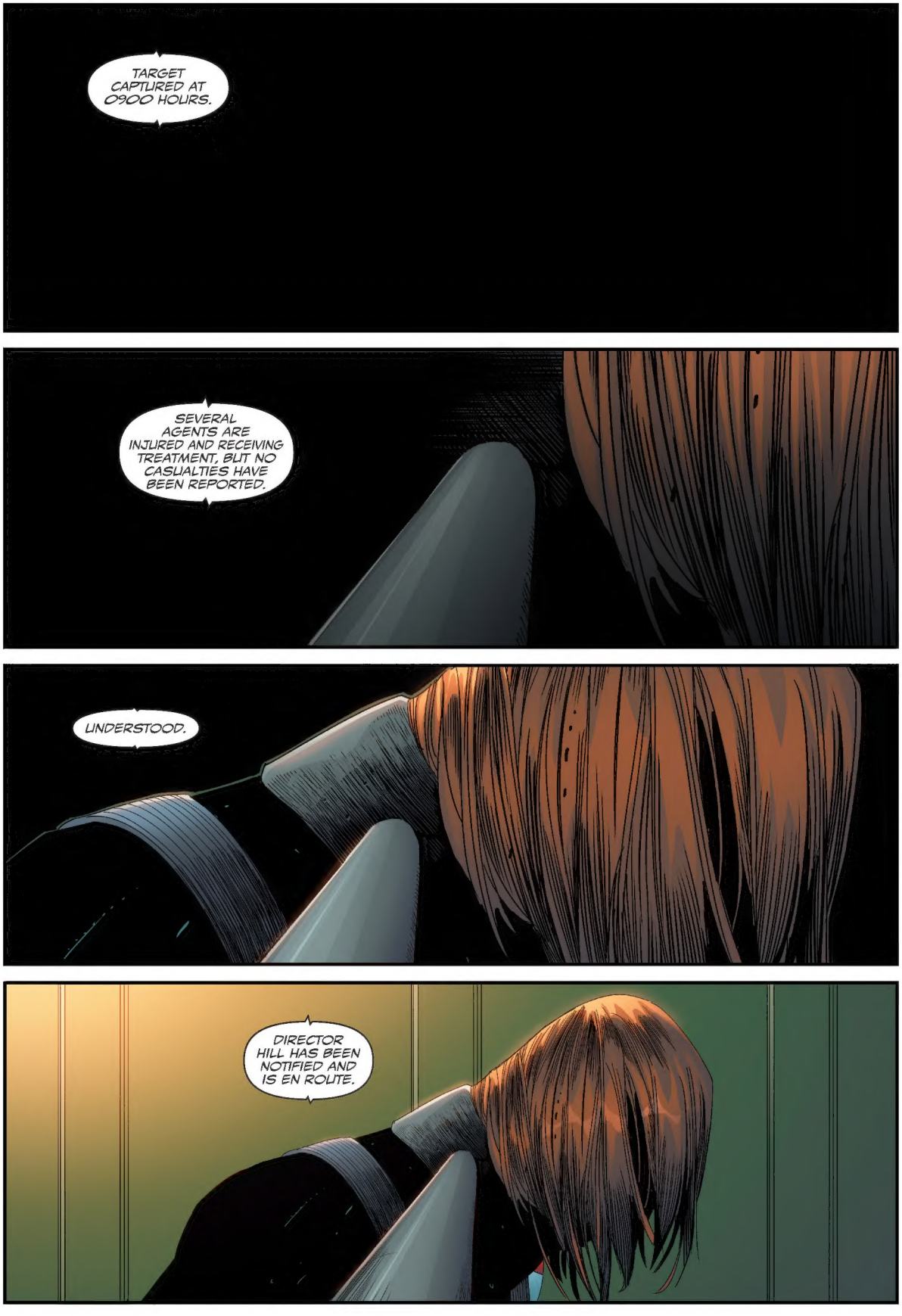
I WISH I COULD...
...BUT I CAN'T LET YOU KILL STEVE.
STAY BACK!
STEVE?
C-CAPTAIN AMERICA?
NO, NO!
I'D NEVER... I'M NOT A KILLER!
MAYBE... MAYBE NOT...
...BUT I CAN'T TAKE THAT CHANCE!

HEART POUNDING
TRAINING TAKES OVER
I COULD KILL HIM IN AN INSTANT.
THWIP
I COULD--
NONONO--
--BUT I WON'T
UHH!
HIT HIM AGAIN
STEVE'S LIFE IS AT STAKE.
CAPTAIN AMERICA...
...YOUR ONLY FRIEND IN THIS STUPID BROKEN WORLD...
STAND DOWN, BARNES!

PUT YOUR HANDS UP AND SURRENDER OR WE WILL TAKE YOU DOWN BY FORCE!

YOU HEARD THE MAN--
--STAND
DOWN!
AHHHGH!

NO!
KEEP FIGHTING!
COMPLETE THE MISSION!
IT ISN'T ABOUT YOU.
YOU'RE DOING THIS...
...FOR STEVE


TARGET CAPTURED AT 0900 HOURS.
SEVERAL AGENTS ARE INJURED AND RECEIVING TREATMENT, BUT NO CASUALTIES HAVE BEEN REPORTED.
UNDERSTOOD.
DIRECTOR HILL HAS BEEN NOTIFIED AND IS EN ROUTE.

TELL HER THERE'S NO RUSH.
WE NABBED THE WINTER SOLDIER AND HE'S NOT GOING ANYWHERE.
NEXT ISSUE: BACK AT THUNDERBOLTS HQ—THE BEER RUN!

RAP SHEET

Well, I don't know about you, but my Bucky-lovin' heart is broken. How will he get out of this one? Will his un-trusty team come through for him when it counts? Well, I'm not going to tell you! But I AM going to let our writer, Jim Zub, answer the rest of your questions! Take it away, Jim!

Greetings from an emotionally drained (but thankful) reader. I picked up THUNDERBOLTS #2 and CAPTAIN AMERICA: STEVE ROGERS #2 on the same day, and let me tell you, it wasn't such a good idea. Is Bucky going to find out the events of CAPTAIN AMERICA sometime during this series? How will he react??? And all of this on top of everything he already has to deal with in this series...You weren't kidding when you said these guys couldn't catch a break. I feel a big blowout coming up fast, and I'm nervous yet super excited to see what happens between these characters. Oh, and thanks for the much needed comic relief in these issues. I'd love to see the Winter Soldier smile or laugh, though. That guy's been through waaay too much. He deserves it!
Thanks so much and keep on doing what you do.

Mary Zopf

Mary--Nick Spencer is the mad genius who came up with this whole Hydra-Cap thing so, in advance, I want you to know that he's to blame for the terrible gut-wrenching things that will happen to Steve and Bucky in the coming months. I, on the other hand, am 100% responsible for the parts that amuse you or make you cheer. Yup. I'm a real team player.

Dear Rap Sheet,
As a Marvel reader who has been with the THUNDERBOLTS since the beginning, I am very happy with the new iteration of the team! So, instead of the Winter Soldier being the "Man on the Wall," the whole team is "on the Wall." This gives the T-bolts an open ticket all over the Marvel Universe and beyond. It is intriguing to note the connection between the Winter Soldier and the T-bolt's first leader, the son of the original Baron Zemo, who killed Bucky way back when. I'm sure this will all come to a head sometime in the future.

Now, who should join the crew? It would have to be someone slightly crazy, but still a hero. Someone who would have the Winter Soldier's back. Bring in Hawkeye! And while you're at it... Mockingbird, too! It's time those two got back together. And to really throw a wild card into the mix, Mr. Immortal from the Great Lakes Avengers always had a lot of potential.

All the best!
Dan Tandarich

Thanks, Dan! You've pretty much nailed it--this new team has free rein to move all over the Marvel Universe, especially with Kobik in the mix. One of the things I really enjoy about the Marvel Universe is the way plotlines echo and twist over time. Zemo, the Cosmic Cube and Bucky are all tied together in interesting ways and we're looking forward to exploring that down the road.

Dear Alanna, Tom and Jim,
I was a bit concerned after reading #2. It seemed like it was just a long action scene that led from one cliffhanger to the next. I feared that this book might end up as just page after page of fighting. Thankfully, my concerns were put to rest with #3. I liked the scene with S.H.I.E.L.D. and Cap. Now that they know that the T-bolts have Kobik, they'll come after them. I hope it takes them a while; I think it adds great suspense.

I also enjoyed the final page. After reading the second issue of CAPTAIN AMERICA (the one with Steve), it was so rich in subtext. Kobik is the ultimate temptation. What will you do when you can change everything? I do not believe I could resist that offer. Let's see if the Thunderbolts can do better.

I love letters pages, and the one in #3 was great. Laura made a few good points. I presume it wasn't Jon's intention to offend any female readers with his rendition of the women in this book. I guess it's just his style. It reminds me a bit of the '90s, where muscles grew bigger and women were often portrayed in a supposedly sexy way. I'll admit that I'm more of an '80s guy. Clean, beautiful artwork --that was always a big draw for me. Maybe there'll be an opportunity to see other artists later down the road. I'd love to see Mike Perkins' art, even if it's just for an issue.

Sincerely,
Lars Meyer
Germany

Sean Izaakse will be coming on board to draw THUNDERBOLTS #6 and #7 while Jon prepares for #8+. Sean has more of that classic look you mentioned, and I think both can work with our team of troublemakers. And Kobik is certainly the ultimate temptation engine made manifest. Lots of fun stuff coming down the road.

I absolutely love this comic. Bucky is my all-time favorite character and reading this makes me fall in love with him even more, I didn't think that was possible. I would like to see Sam Wilson and Steve Rogers reunite with Bucky. I'm excited and nervous to see where this story is going to go.

Melissa Discola

Thanks, Melissa. I'm nervous, too. Every time I think we've dug down as far as we can go with bad stuff we can do to the Thunderbolts, I realize there are even deeper pits to dig, and the whole time, Alanna stands over me cackling with her shovel raised like one of those Sand People with a gaffi stick. What I'm trying to say is, please send help.

[Editor's note: Don't send help.]

I'm new to comic books in general. I've read about 11 of them in total (CAPTAIN AMERICA Vol. 5 #1-6, FIGHTING AVENGER, A YEAR OF MARVELS: JULY, WINTER KILLS and now THUNDERBOLTS #1-2) and I'm really enjoying it. What brought me here was the excellent artwork of Bucky looking at Spider-Man through his sniper rifle that's floating around Tumblr. I'm looking forward to that issue. Regarding this issue, I wanted to ask--was it really necessary to have Ms. Moonstone strip to her undies when Kobik took out the stone? Kobik kept her clothes on when she let go of the stone, I presume Ms. Moonstone was dressed when she got it herself. I've read more about the problematic portrayals of women in comic books than I have read comic books in general, and regardless of that, I want to like comic books. They're a fun visual medium and there are so many iterations of the same characters--and just about infinite ways to tell their intriguing stories. And I suppose this is my first real glimpse into the casual sexism inherent in this industry. But I enjoyed this comic. Bucky becoming a strong leader and caring for his teammates and accepting their flaws in a way that maybe Captain America cannot is my weakness, so I will stick around for it.

Maple Pant

Hi, Maple (I'm from Canada so your name is very important to me). Moonstone's costume is actually created by the stone that gives her the power, so when it was removed from her, her outfit vanished as well. We've had both the male and female characters in various states of undress in the series and will probably continue to do so down the road, but we don't do it with an eye toward sexism, I assure you. Jon

and I are committed to showing off Bucky's abs even more than Karla's underwear. This series is a big ol' pool party and everyone's gonna show off their rockin' bods.

To all the people behind this excellent THUNDERBOLTS re-launch,

I just wanted to drop a quick note to say thank you so much for this volume. You have combined two of my favorite Marvel concepts (the core members of the original T-bolts and the resurrected Bucky Barnes/Winter Soldier). I have fond memories of the original T-BOLTS series (I find it amazing to think that was over 14 years ago now!!) and, so far, this series looks to be a worthy successor.

I just had two questions and a point of clarification which I would appreciate comment on:

1) Can we look forward to seeing any more of the old members? I'd be particularly keen to see Blackheath (the former Plant-Man) and Harrier/Cardinal.

2) I don't suppose there's any chance of exploring the V-Battalion's current state, is there? (As far as I know, Roger Aubrey and Betty Bairstow are still active but I think that may be all!)

3) This is the point I would appreciate clarification on: back in the last volume of THUNDERBOLTS, Bert (Fixer) killed his younger self in order to allow his teammates to escape from their uncontrolled time travels. With this being the case, will there be any explanation as to how/why Bert got into Pleasant Hill and how he is able to appear in the current volume? I was under the impression he was trapped in a time loop...

Thank you for taking the time to read (and hopefully answer) these questions.

James Hunter

Would you believe it's been almost 20 years of THUNDERBOLTS? Yeah, it's crazy.

1) Some old members may be making an appearance, but no current plans for Blackheath or Harrier.

2) The V-Battalion isn't on our immediate radar, but anything is possible down the road.

3) Fixer was certainly trapped in a time loop and I haven't forgotten about that. Issue #6 has the answers you seek.

Hey, Bucky seems almost happy! He's got a team that hasn't killed each other yet, a righteous goal--aaaand a Cosmic Cube girl, because normal is for little people. I'm loving the fatherly way that Bucky treats Kobik. It's like they've adopted each other. Everyone else only seems to see her power. So, when do they find out about the Steve thing?

Thank you!
Morgan Harris

Good question. Hey, Nick Spencer, when do they find out about that Steve thing?

Nick, why are you laughing in that maniacal, Latverian kind of way as lightning splits the sky behind you?

(That's not good...)

Hello all,

Loving THUNDERBOLTS, the first two issues were awesome! Having this team back was so necessary--it's a shame it took so long. Writing so far is top-notch, and I'm glad to hear we've got another Canadian at the helm. Art is also excellent. In fact, I just had to mention, on the cover of issue #2, Moonstone was looking very Liefeld-ish...I like it!

Having a sentient Cosmic Cube on the team sure has changed the team dynamic in...interesting... ways. I like it! I am just hoping that, over time, it doesn't get too gimmicky. So just something to throw out there, since you did mention Alpha Flight in the letters page of issue #2... Any chance at all of seeing my second-favorite Marvel character, Wild Child, appear in this comic? I just think it'd make for an interesting guest star/evil-villain-of-the-month.

THUNDERBOLTS is one of the few Marvel titles I collect at this moment in time, so keep making them great and I'll keep reading them!

Sincerely,
Mr. Dredd Sweet

What I need to do is carefully enable our Canadian Thunderbolts machinations by casually switching out character after character until only Alpha Flight members remain. Sorry, Atlas, it's time for Sasquatch. Outta the way, Fixer, it's Puck's turn! I'm sure no one will notice...

Hey Jim, Jon and Matt,

Fantastic first issue! Great pacing and loved how accessible you made it for potential first-time readers. And Jim, from one Canadian to another, please have the team dining on poutine sometime.

Cheers,
Chris Doucher

Next issue: Poutine, maple syrup and back bacon as the team plays hockey and builds an igloo. It's going to be beautiful. I'm getting teary-eyed just thinking about it.

Oh my soul! These cliffhangers! I have never been so excited for Wednesdays in my life! Firstly, I have to say, amazing job on everything. I love getting to know these characters, especially Mr. Bucky Barnes. Secondly, all of the art is incredible and I would hang it on my wall! Thirdly, what are your thoughts on the new "Cap is Hydra" series? How will that affect this series? How will Bucky react? Please let him smack some sense into Steve. Also, I just freaking love this series and need more of it in my life. Thank you!

Megan Snyder

If Bucky found out Steve was part of Hydra, it would utterly destroy him, Megan. Doing that would be the cruelest, most awful thing we could ever do and, as a huge Winter Soldier fan, I would never--(Alanna whispers terrible secrets in Jim's ear.) Oh...uh...Whelp, that's all the time we have for letters this month, gang! Until next time, keep sending your letters to MHEROES@MARVEL.COM marked "Okay to Print," and don't pull Kobik's finger!

NEXT:

BEER RUN!